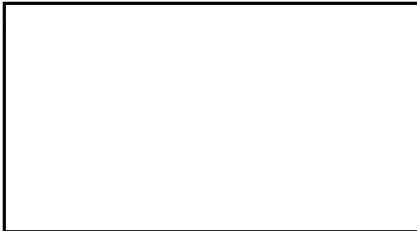


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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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DAILY BRIEF

*Laos: The decision of Premier Souvanna and most of his cabinet members to resign makes an early resolution of the current crisis unlikely.

Souvanna, accompanied by members of his cabinet and a representative of the rightist coup group, flew to Luang Prabang yesterday to submit his resignation to King Savang.

Prior to his departure from Vientiane, Souvanna informed Ambassador Unger that a majority of the cabinet earlier in the day had voted for the dissolution of the present coalition government. He anticipated that the King would accept his resignation and assume "full powers" pending the designation of someone--possibly Souvanna himself--to form a new government.

Souvanna was doubtful that a balanced government could be formed in the present circumstances. He indicated that the coup group is determined to deny the Pathet Lao any cabinet posts, and noted that General Phoumi also favors their exclusion. Souvanna, observing that formation of a government without the Pathet Lao might entail serious consequences, maintained that he had argued "until he was exhausted" with the coup leaders, whom he characterized as "those young brats who know absolutely nothing."

The coup leaders, increasingly concerned over their failure to win widespread support, appear to be taking steps to ensure their control over Vientiane.

(continued)

General Siho, a key member of the group, reportedly has alerted nearby units under his command for a possible move into the city should trouble break out.

These precautions may have been prompted by indications that General Kouprasith, 5th Military Region commander and the nominal leader of the revolutionary committee, was allying himself with General Phoumi in joint efforts to curb Siho's power. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Phoumi may be readying forces for a move against the capital. [REDACTED]

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DAILY BRIEF

2

Cuba: The strong Cuban notes to the US on 20 April indicate that US overflights and the US naval base will be major issues in the Cuban diplomatic and propaganda offensive forecast in Castro's 19 April speech.

The note warns that the US would bear "exclusive responsibility" for any "dangerous situation" resulting from a continuation of "spying flights over Cuban territory." The note rejected the US right to carry out such flights.

President Dorticos, speaking on 20 April, reflected the defiant tone set by Castro and referred pointedly to the issue of overflights. Responding to a public US warning against Cuban interference with these flights, Dorticos declared that Cuba is determined to defend its sovereignty and is not afraid to "carry out the appropriate action." Cuban leaders have never before been so explicit in their public references to the overflights.

Dorticos also referred to Cuba's claim to the territory of the US naval base at Guantanamo Bay. Repeating Cuba's long-standing position that its claim would be made before an appropriate international organization, Dorticos added that Cuba would make this move in the "more or less near future." The Cubans also sent a second note on 20 April strongly protesting in violent language alleged provocations by US personnel stationed at Guantanamo.

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Communist China: [The air force has apparently had to resort to cannibalization to keep its transport fleet in operation.]

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[Almost all of China's aircraft are Soviet built. The Chinese apparently have not been able to obtain or manufacture needed components in sufficient quantities.]

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DAILY BRIEF

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NOTES

South Korea: Student demonstrations continue in spite of government warnings and more aggressive police controls, and the possibility of an outbreak of violence is increasing. President Pak Chong-hui has indicated to US Ambassador Berger that he may impose martial law, move additional troops into Seoul, and close and occupy the universities in a massive show of force if the disorders continue. Pak apparently is waiting, however, to see if the students will in time heed a warning of stronger police action that was issued on 20 April.

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Brazil: US Ambassador Gordon reports that President Castello Branco is still feeling his way on many administrative and policy matters, but that he seems to be doing so conscientiously and thoughtfully. In an 18 April conversation with the ambassador, Castello Branco stressed Brazil's need for economic planning and for coordination of activities in connection with the Alliance for Progress.

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DAILY BRIEF

6

West Germany: Vice Chancellor Erich Mende, chairman of the coalition Free Democratic Party (FDP), has publicly proposed resumption of the limited local traffic across and along the zonal demarcation line that was terminated by the East Zone authorities in 1958. Initial press reports from East Germany suggest that Mende's proposal is not likely to be given favorable consideration there.

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